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DOI:

[10.1007/s11581-016-1812-0](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11581-016-1812-0)

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Document Version

Peer reviewed version

Citation for published version (Harvard):

Deng, D, Chen, N, Xiao, X, Du, S & Wang, Y 2016, 'Electrochemical performance of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated graphene oxide as an electrode material for supercapacitor', *Ionics*, pp. 1-9.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11581-016-1812-0>

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Electrochemical performance of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated graphene oxide as an electrode material for supercapacitor

Dongyang Deng¹ · Nan Chen² · Xuechun Xiao¹ · Shangfeng Du³ · Yude Wang²

Received: 5 June 2016 / Revised: 22 August 2016 / Accepted: 22 August 2016
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Abstract Cerium oxide nanoparticles and cerium oxide nanoparticle-decorated graphene oxide (GO) are synthesized via a facile chemical coprecipitation method in the presence of hexadecyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB). Nanostructure studies and electrochemical performances of the as-prepared samples were systematically investigated. The crystalline structure and morphology of the nanocomposites were examined by X-ray diffraction (XRD), scanning electron microscopy (SEM), transition electron microscopy (TEM), Raman spectrum, and X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS). Electrochemical properties of the CeO₂ electrode, the GO electrode, and the nanocomposites electrodes were investigated by cyclic voltammetry (CV), galvanostatic charge/discharge (GCD), and electrochemical impedance spectroscopy (EIS) measurements. The CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (at the mole ratio of CeO₂/GO = 1:4) electrode exhibited excellent supercapacitive behavior with a high specific capacitance of 382.94 F/g at the current density of 3.0 A/g. These superior electrochemical features demonstrate that the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO is a promising material for next-generation supercapacitor systems.

Keywords Coprecipitation method · CeO₂ nanoparticles · Graphene oxide · Supercapacitors · Electrochemical properties

Introduction

Environmental concern over the ever-growing energy demands and curtailed fossil fuel resources has provoked the quest for sustainable energy storage devices with enhanced power and energy densities [1, 2]. Supercapacitors, which are one of the most promising candidates for flexible energy storage devices, have attracted considerable attention due to high power density, long cycle life, and excellent charge–discharge rates compared to common batteries [3–5]. The performances of supercapacitors depend mainly on the properties of their active electrode materials, and they can be usually divided into three types including carbon materials, conducting polymers and metal oxides [6]. Among them, nanostructured metal oxides have attracted much attention due to their favorable redox potential and conductivity to store electrical charge. Therefore, some typical metal oxides, such as RuO₂ [7], MnO₂ [8–10], and Co₃O₄ [11], have been widely investigated as high-capacity electrode materials for supercapacitors. However, several problems such as the high cost, low electrical conductivity, and poor stability limit the practical applications of metal oxides as supercapacitor electrodes. Thus, it is imperative to develop cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and high-performance alternative candidates for supercapacitors.

As one of the most reactive rare earth materials, CeO₂ has attracted a great deal of attention due to its extensive applications [12–15]. CeO₂ in nanometer size can be considered as one of the promising redox supercapacitor materials since CeO₂ is the most abundant, environmental friendly, and least expensive rare earth metal oxide with excellent redox

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64 characteristics. Furthermore, its nanostructure with superior
 65 surface area has prominent effect on pseudocapacitance.
 66 Nevertheless, because of the intrinsic poor electrical conduc-
 67 tivity of metal oxides, only the surface part of electroactive
 68 materials can effectively contribute to the total capacitance
 69 and the underneath parts could hardly participate in the
 70 electrochemical charge storage process, which severely affects
 71 the performance of supercapacitors. One approach in solving
 72 this problem is to combine carbon materials with high electri-
 73 cal conductivity and metal oxides as electrodes for
 74 supercapacitors. Recently, Dezfuli and coworkers utilized a
 75 sonochemical method to synthesize CeO_2 -reduced graphene
 76 oxide (RGO), which showed a specific capacitance of 185 F/g
 77 at the current density of 2 A/g [16].

78 Graphene oxide (GO), which possesses the characteristics
 79 of graphene, shows a great promise for the fabrication of
 80 nanoscale structures, and more importantly, contains a range
 81 of reactive oxygen functional groups (e.g., carboxylic acids,
 82 hydroxy, and carbonyl groups). However, the individual GO
 83 sheet exhibits a tendency to aggregate and re-stack owing to
 84 the interplanar π - π interactions and van der Waals' forces
 85 between the graphene layers [3]. This agglomeration reduces
 86 the surface area of the GO films and the diffusion of electro-
 87 lyte ions, which results in a decrease in the electrochemical
 88 performance. To avoid the re-stacking, composites made of
 89 GO and metal oxides seem to be a good solution. This is
 90 beneficial to both materials because of their synergistic effect.
 91 Metal oxides prevent GO from agglomeration and re-stacking
 92 and also increase the available surface area. Besides, GO helps
 93 the formation of metal oxide nanostructures with uniformly
 94 dispersed controlled morphologies, suppressing the agglom-
 95 eration of metal oxides. The oxygen-containing groups within
 96 graphene oxide will ensure good electrical contact, interfacial
 97 interactions, and bonding between graphene oxide and metal
 98 oxide.

99 In the present work, we use a simple facile chemical
 100 coprecipitation method to synthesize CeO_2 , GO, and CeO_2
 101 nanoparticle-decorated GO materials for the application of
 102 supercapacitors. The structure, surface morphology, and com-
 103 position of the as-prepared samples have been fully investi-
 104 gated. The capacitive behaviors of the electrodes were also
 105 investigated and compared.

106 Experimental

107 Materials

108 The graphene oxide (GO) was prepared according to modified
 109 Hummers' method. And the mass concentration of the as-
 110 prepared GO is 10 mg/mL. All the other reagents used in the
 111 experiments were purchased from commercial sources of an-
 112 alytical grade and used without further purification.

Preparation of CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO

113 CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO at different mole ratio was
 114 prepared by a facile chemical coprecipitation method. In brief,
 115 182 mg hexadecyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB) was
 116 dissolved into 10 mL distilled water with stirring at the tem-
 117 perature of 40 °C until a homogenous solution was obtained.
 118 Four hundred thirty-four milligram sample of cerium nitrate
 119 hexahydrate was dissolved into 10 mL distilled water with
 120 stirring to get transparent solution. Then 10 mL CTAB
 121 (0.05 M) was added into the solution dropwise under stirring
 122 for 30 min. Next, GO with a certain mole ratio ($n_{\text{CeO}_2}/n_{\text{GO}}$
 123 =1:1, 1:2, 1:4, 1:5, respectively) was added into the resulting
 124 solution with maintaining stirring for 10 min, and the GO was
 125 dispersed in the gotten solution by ultrasonic vibration for 1 h.
 126 An amount of 10 mL of 25 wt% liquor ammonia was added
 127 into the resulting suspension dropwise under stirring. After
 128 vigorous stirring for 2 h, the suspension was aged for
 129 30 min at room temperature. The resulting products were cen-
 130 trifuged, and the precipitates were thoroughly washed with
 131 distilled deionized water and ethanol and dried at 60 °C over-
 132 night. For comparison, CeO_2 and the GO were also synthe-
 133 sized under the same condition as CeO_2 nanoparticle-
 134 decorated GO. The resultant products were collected and fur-
 135 ther characterized.

Structural and morphology characterization

137 The crystallographic structures of the materials were deter-
 138 mined by Rigaku D/max-3B diffractometer with a copper tar-
 139 get and $\text{K}_{\alpha 1}$ radiation ($\lambda = 1.54056 \text{ \AA}$) from 10° to 90° in step
 140 of 0.01°. Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) images of the
 141 morphology of samples were obtained from FEI
 142 QUANTA200 with microscope operating at 30 kV. Detailed
 143 studies of the microstructure were also carried out by trans-
 144 mission electron microscopy (TEM) (JEOL JEM-2100) at an
 145 acceleration voltage of 200 kV. X-ray photoelectron spectro-
 146 scopy (XPS) was carried out at room temperature in an
 147 ESCALAB 250 system.

Electrochemical measurements

149 Nickel foam with the size of 1 cm × 2 cm was first pretreated
 150 successively with diluted hydrochloric acid and absolute eth-
 151 anol to ensure a clean surface. The electrodes were fabricated
 152 as follows: the as-prepared samples, carbon black, and
 153 polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) were mixed in a mass ratio
 154 of 85:10:5. A small amount of ethanol was added to make a
 155 homogeneous mixture. Then the resulting mixture was coated
 156 onto the nickel foam substrate, which was followed by drying
 157 at 60 °C for 24 h in a vacuum oven. The resulting paste was
 158 pressed at 10 MPa. Each electrode contained about 3 mg of
 159

160 electroactive material and had a geometric surface area of
161 about 1 cm². A typical three-electrode experimental cell
162 equipped with a working electrode, a platinum foil counter
Q1 163 electrode, and a saturated calomel electrode (SCE) was used
164 for measuring the electrochemical properties of the working
165 electrode. All electrochemical measurements were carried out
166 on a CHI 600E electrochemical workstation (ChenHua
167 Instruments, Shanghai) in 6 M KOH aqueous solution as elec-
168 trolyte at 25 °C. The electrochemical properties of the prod-
169 ucts were investigated with cyclic voltammetry (CV), galva-
170 nostatic charge/discharge (GCD) tests, and electrochemical
171 impedance spectroscopy (EIS) which were obtained using an
172 AC voltage of 5 mV in a frequency range from 0.01 Hz to
173 100 kHz. The specific capacitances (C, (F/g)) as shown in
174 Table 1 were calculated according to the following equations:

$$C = \frac{I \times t}{\Delta V \times m}$$

(1)

175 where *I* (mA) is the constant discharge current, *t* (s) is the
176 discharging time, *m* (mg) is the total mass of active materials
177 in both electrodes, and Δ*V* (V) is the operating voltage win-
178 dow obtained from the discharge curve excluding the voltage
179 drop.
180

181 **Results and discussion**

182 In order to confirm the structure, phase, and purity of the
183 materials, X-ray diffraction patterns (XRD) were recorded
184 for the CeO₂ and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4). As
185 shown in Fig. 1, the curve of CeO₂ and CeO₂ nanoparticle-
186 decorated GO (1:4) are shown in blue and red, respectively.
187 The short vertical bars in green represent the positions of the
188 Bragg reflections. The diffraction peaks of CeO₂ and CeO₂
189 nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) coincide well with the stan-
190 dard pattern of CeO₂ (JCPDS card no. 81-0792). There is no
191 diffraction peak originating from the GO species in the XRD
192 spectrum of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4), probably
193 due to the bad crystallinity of GO in the CeO₂ nanoparticle-
194 decorated GO (1:4) sample. The characteristics of the XRD
195 pattern demonstrate that GO does not change the crystal struc-
196 ture of CeO₂. The width of the diffraction peaks indicates the

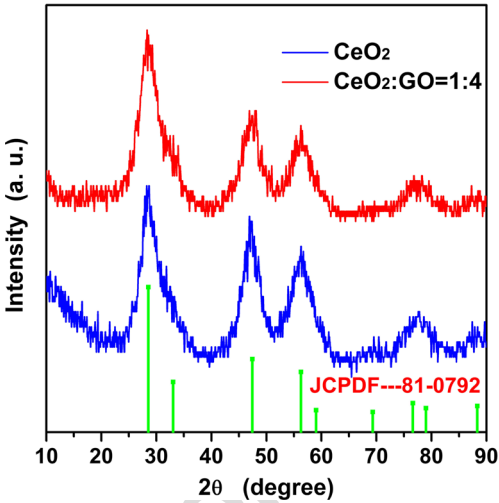


Fig. 1 XRD pattern of the as-prepared CeO₂ and CeO₂/GO (1:4)

small average grain size. The average crystal size of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample is calculated to be 2.31 nm.

Raman spectroscopy is a standard technique for determining the ordered and disordered nature of carbon-based materials. Figure 2 shows the Raman spectra of CeO₂ and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4). One peak at 459.03 cm⁻¹ could be seen in the Raman spectra of CeO₂ and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4), which is attributed to the symmetrical stretching mode of the Ce–O₈ vibrational unit [16]. Peaks were observed at 1345.85 and 1593.16 cm⁻¹ in the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) spectrum, which confirmed the D and G bands, respectively. The D band represents sp³ carbon in the graphitic lattice, which is associated with the structural defects such as bond length disorder, bond-angle disorder, and hybridization which can break the symmetry and selection rules, while the G band is related to the in-plane vibration of C sp² atoms [17–19]. More intensity of the D and G bands can be attributed to the high loading of GO in CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4). Therefore, the result

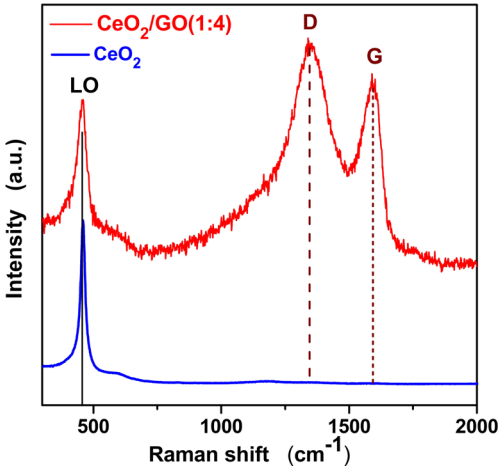


Fig. 2 Raman spectra of the as-prepared CeO₂/GO (1:4)

Table 1 Comparison of capacitance values for CeO₂/GO

Materials	Capacitance (F/g)
CeO ₂	81.18
GO	35.12
CeO ₂ /GO (1:1)	45.29
CeO ₂ /GO (1:2)	82.35
CeO ₂ /GO (1:4)	382.94
CeO ₂ /GO (1:5)	18.37

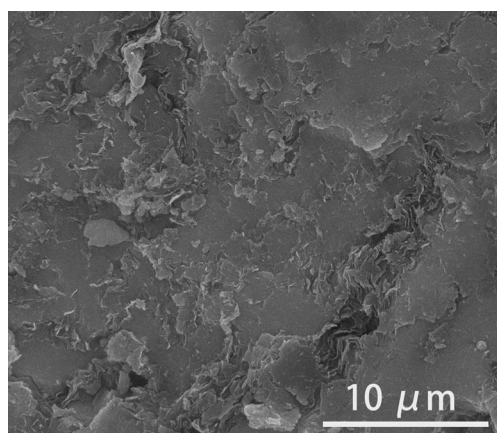


Fig. 3 SEM image of the as-prepared CeO₂/GO (1:4)

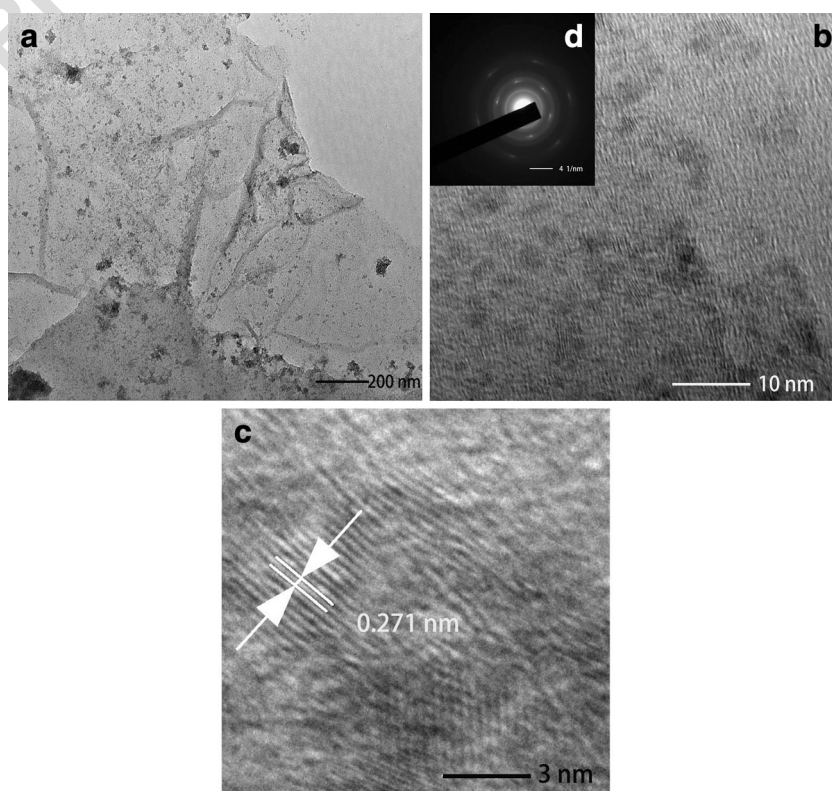
of the Raman measurement confirms that the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) has been formed during the facile chemical coprecipitation treatment.

The morphology of the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample was characterized using SEM. As shown in Fig. 3, crumpled sheets observed were GO, whereas none CeO₂ nanoparticles were observed in CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample. It is probably due to the crystal size of CeO₂ that is so small. In order to find CeO₂ nanoparticles, the sample was further investigated by TEM and HR-TEM. From Fig. 4a, one can find that the distribution of CeO₂ nanoparticles across the surface of the GO sheets is clearly visible, suggesting that the chemical coprecipitation method

is a simple and efficient way of synthesizing CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO. In Fig. 4b, CeO₂ nanoparticles were uniformly spread throughout the GO sheets. The size of CeO₂ is about 2–3 nm, which is in satisfactory agreement with the results from the XRD studies. Furthermore, in Fig. 4d (inset of Fig. 4b), the SAED pattern of the nanocomposite also displayed bright diffraction rings, conforming the growth of polycrystalline CeO₂ on the graphene sheets [19]. As shown in Fig. 4c, the HR-TEM image of the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample shows the orientation of grains in different directions, and the lattice fringes are clearly visible with space of 0.271 nm corresponding to the (200) planes of CeO₂.

XPS was employed to characterize the surface chemical compositions and the valence states of the as-synthesized CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4), as shown in Fig. 5. As is shown in Fig. 5a, one finds that the C1s consists of three components: C–C (284.67 eV), C–O (286.25 eV), and C=O (287.98 eV). This spectrum was fully consistent with those reported previously [20]. The high-resolution XPS spectrum of O1s is shown in Fig. 5b. Especially, the state of O1s indicates that there are two sorts of oxygen on the surface. One is the lattice oxygen (O_{lattice}) and the other is adsorbed oxygen (O_x[–]). The peaks of adsorbed oxygen and lattice oxygen are shown at binding energies of 531.24 and 529.08 eV, respectively [21]. O_{lattice} is attributed to the oxygen ions in the crystal lattice which are thought to be pretty stable and have no contribution to the reactions on the electrode. Meanwhile, O_x[–] is

Fig. 4 TEM images of the as-prepared CeO₂/GO (1:4)



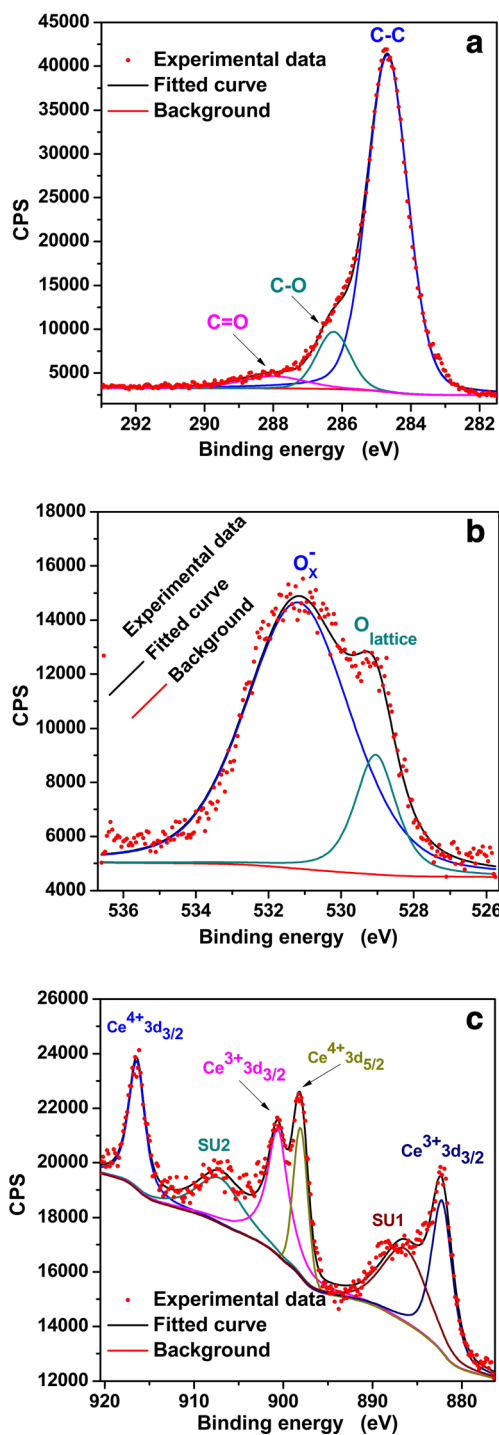


Fig. 5 The high-resolution XPS survey spectra of C 1s (a), O 1s (b), and Ce (c) of the as-prepared CeO₂/GO (1:4)

as-prepared CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) exhibited amazing electrochemical properties. The Ce3d core level peak can be confirmed by XPS analysis, as shown in Fig.5c. Due to its highly non-stoichiometric nature, Ce atoms with both 3+ and 4+ valences are presented in CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4). The main peaks of Ce⁴⁺ 3d_{3/2} and Ce⁴⁺ 3d_{5/2} are shown at binding energies of 917.49 and 898.18 eV, respectively. Those of Ce³⁺ 3d_{3/2} and Ce³⁺ 3d_{5/2} are located at 900.62 and 882.40 eV, respectively. Two additional satellite lines SU1 and SU2, which means “shake-up,” are shown at 886.63 and 916.49 eV, respectively. To rationalize XPS findings, one can state that the presence of Ce³⁺ is a result of oxygen vacancies and this effect is enhanced in nanoparticles because a larger fraction of the atoms is on the surface as the particle size is reduced and the surface atoms have reduced coordination [22]. The oxygen vacancies that lead to the transformation between Ce⁴⁺ and Ce³⁺ may be a key issue in reactions on the electrode. Through calculating the ratio of peak areas, one can find that the mole ratio of Ce³⁺/Ce⁴⁺ is 1.59 for CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4). It is obvious that CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample has a strong oxygen storage and release capacity via the redox shift between Ce⁴⁺ and Ce³⁺ under oxidizing and reducing conditions, respectively.

To test the supercapacitive performance of pure CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrodes, CV was firstly recorded in a three-electrode system using saturated calomel electrode (SCE) as the reference and platinum foil as the counter electrode. The capacitive behavior of pure CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrodes was systematically examined in this work and typical CV curves of pure CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) measured at 10 mV/s in 6 M KOH which are shown in Fig. 6a. The CV curves show that CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) nanocomposite electrode has the largest enclosed area, compared with CeO₂ and GO electrodes, exhibiting the highest specific capacitance. We just qualitatively describe the electrochemical performance of the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrode, CeO₂ nanoparticle electrode, and GO electrode by the CV curve. And then we use GCD tests to quantitatively describe the specific capacitance of electrodes. In the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample, the synergistic effect is found by combining CeO₂ and GO, which reasonably resulted from the uniform dispersion of CeO₂ nanocrystals onto the surface of GO sheets and better electronic conductivity of the GO. Hence, a high electrochemical performance can be achieved. Figure 6b shows the CV curves of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrode at different scan rates of 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 mV/s in a potential range of 0 to 0.51 V. One pair of redox peaks is observed in every CV curve, which reveals that the capacitance characteristic of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample is typical

attributed to the absorbed oxygen ions, which is active in reactions on the electrode. Through calculating the areas of O_x⁻ and O_{lattice} emission lines, the concentrations of O_x⁻ and O_{lattice} to OIs are estimated to be 83.44 and 16.56 %, respectively. As one can see, the percentage of O_x⁻ is so large, which may be a key issue in reactions on the electrode. Therefore, the

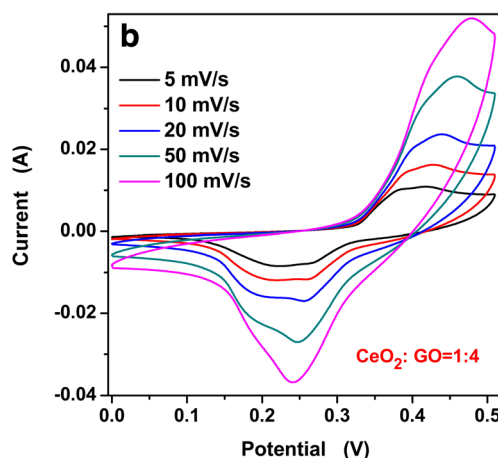
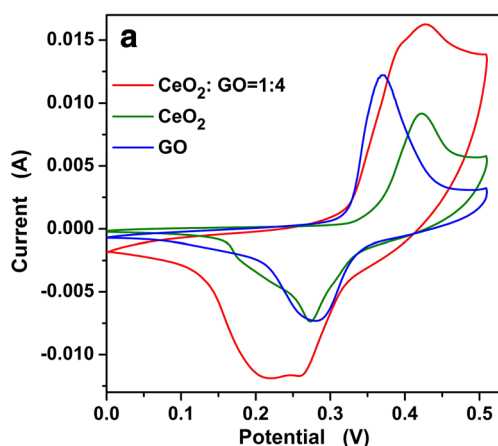


Fig. 6 **a** CV curves of pure CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂/GO (1:4) nanoparticle electrodes at 10 mV/s; **b** CV curves of CeO₂/GO (1:4) nanoparticle electrode at different scan rates

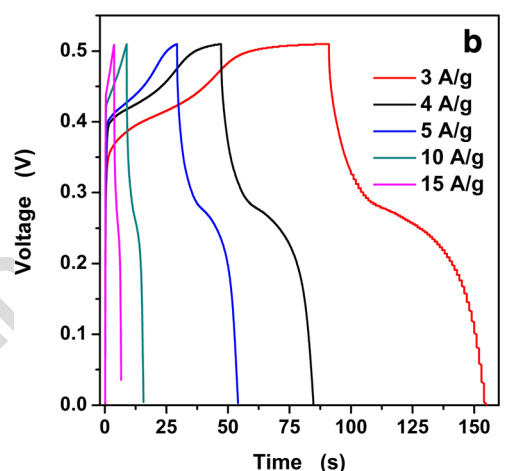
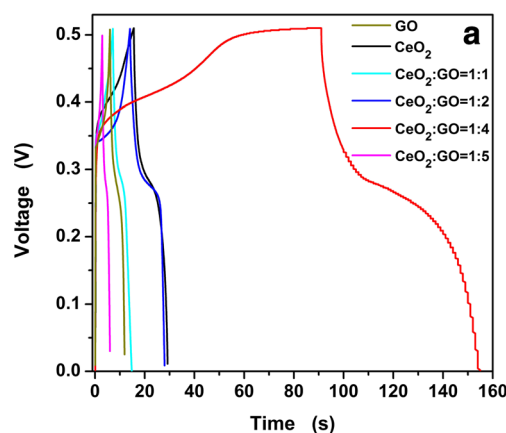


Fig. 7 **a** Charge-discharge curves of pure CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂/GO (1:4) nanoparticle electrodes at 3 A/g; **b** charge-discharge curves of CeO₂/GO (1:4) nanoparticle electrode at 3~15 A/g

pseudocapacitance. At low scan rates (5–20 mV/s), no curve shows significant changes in the shape with increasing scan rate, indicating highly reversible redox reactions. This shows stability of electrolytes in the supercapacitor. However, the shape of the CV curves is slightly distorted as the scan rate increase, especially at a high scan rate of 100 mV/s.

The charge–discharge curves of the as-synthesized materials are shown in Fig. 7. Charge–discharge curves of CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO at 3.0 A/g are shown in Fig. 7a. The discharge-specific capacitance values of CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) calculated from the discharge curves are 81.18, 35.12, and 382.94 F/g at the current density of 3.0 A/g, respectively. One can see that the specific capacitance of the as-prepared CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) nanocomposite sample was 990.37 % higher than that of GO electrode and 371.72 % higher than that of CeO₂ electrode, respectively. The result quantitatively expresses the meaning of compositing CeO₂ and GO. The specific capacitance values of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO nanocomposites at different mole ratio at the current density of 3.0 A/g are shown in Table 1. Among the obtained samples, the CeO₂ nanoparticle-

decorated GO (1:4) exhibits the best electrochemical performance and the specific capacitance value can be reached to 382.94 F/g at the current density of 3.0 A/g. According to the results in Table 1, the composition of CeO₂/GO composites plays a significant role in specific capacitance. In Fig. 4, one can see that the size of CeO₂ is about 2–3 nm, so the number of the particles is large. When the content of GO is less, there is not enough GO to provide support for CeO₂; small CeO₂ particles cannot be evenly dispersed on the GO. So the specific capacitance is lower. When the molar ratios of CeO₂/GO reaches 1:4, there is enough GO to provide support for CeO₂. The synergistic effect is found by combining CeO₂ and GO, which reasonably resulted from the uniform dispersion of CeO₂ nanocrystals onto the surface of GO sheets and better electronic conductivity of the GO. Hence, a high electrochemical performance can be achieved. Continuing increasing the amount of the GO, the individual GO sheet exhibits a tendency to aggregate and re-stack owing to the interplanar π – π interactions and van der Waals forces between the GO layers. The agglomeration reduces the surface area of the GO films and the diffusion of electrolyte ions, which results in a decrease in the electrochemical performance. Moreover, the

agglomeration of GO sheets cut off the contact between electrolyte and cerium oxide on the surface of the folding covers, resulting in a loss of the specific capacitance. Figure 7b shows the galvanostatic charge/discharge (GCD) curves of the CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrode in the 0–0.51 V potential window. The value of specific capacitance calculated by the GCD method for CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4), at current densities of 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 10.0, and 15.0 A/g, was found to be 382.94, 295.69, 244.12, 137.06, and 85.68 F/g, respectively. Besides, the specific capacitance values of CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) are much higher than the other CeO₂-based electrode materials, as shown in Table 2 [16, 23–34].

The calculated specific capacitance values as a function of current density for CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂ nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample are shown in Fig. 8. For the red curve, it can be observed that the specific capacitance decreases with the increasing current density from 3.0 to 15.0 A/g. Generally, the rate capability is heavily dependent

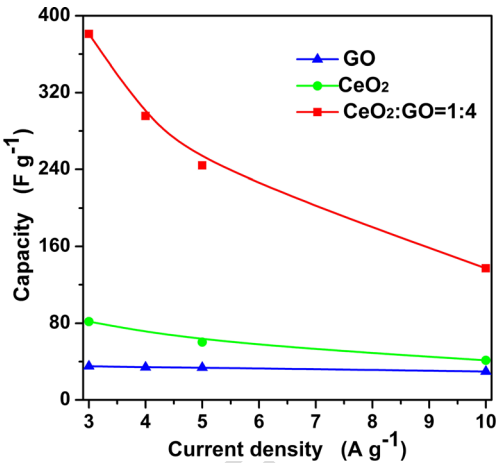


Fig. 8 Specific capacitance of CeO₂, GO, and CeO₂/GO (1:4) nanoparticle electrodes as a function of current density

on three processes: the ion diffusion in the electrolyte, the surface adsorption of ions on the electrode materials, and the charge transfer in the electrode. The specific capacitance

Q2 t2.1 **Table 2** Comparison of
t2.2 capacitance values for various
structural morphologies of CeO₂-
based electrodes

Materials	Capacitance (F/g)	Current density (A/g) or scan rates (mV/s)	electrolyte	References
Graphene-ceria	110	10 mV/s	1 M H ₂ SO ₄	[23]
Pure CeO ₂	75			
CeO ₂	57	5 mV/s	3 M KOH	[24]
CeO ₂ -deposited 3D graphene	208	1 A/g		
Graphene/CeO ₂	89.0	1 A/g	2 M KOH	[25]
CeO ₂ -RGO	185	2 A/g	0.5 M Na ₂ SO ₄	[16]
Fe/CeO ₂ -decorated carbon nanofibers	56	Not given	1 M KOH	[26]
CeO ₂ /activated carbon	243	1 A/g	1 M H ₂ SO ₄	[27]
Ag/CeO ₂ /rGO	432.82	1 A/g	3 M KOH	[28]
CeO ₂ octahedron @MnO ₂	178.5	0.25 A/g	1 M Na ₂ SO ₄	[29]
CeO ₂ nanowire @MnO ₂	255.2			
CeO ₂ /Fe ₂ O ₃ composite nanospindles	142.6	5 mV/s	6 M KOH	[30]
Carbon-coated CeO ₂ nanorods	644	0.5 A/g	3 M KOH	[31]
Porous carbon/cerium oxide nanoparticle	150	0.25 A/g	1 M TEABF ₄ in acetonitrile	[32]
Hexagonal CeO ₂ nanoparticles (CTAB)	320 ± 3	2 A/g	K ₂ SO ₄	[33]
NiO-CeO ₂	314	1 A/g	3 M KOH	[34]
CeO ₂	81.18	3 A/g	6 M KOH	This work
	60.37	5 A/g		
	41.39	10 A/g		
GO	35.12	3 A/g		
	33.73	5 A/g		
	29.63	10 A/g		
CeO ₂ /GO (1:4)	382.94	3 A/g		
	295.69	4 A/g		
	244.12	5 A/g		

decreases with increasing current density owing to reduced penetration of electrolyte into the pores of electrode materials [35].

The EIS analysis is an important technique for investigation of the supercapacitive performance and typical resistance of electrode materials for supercapacitors. The Nyquist impedance plots for CeO_2 , GO, and CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrodes in 6 M KOH solutions over the frequency range from 0.01 to 100 kHz are shown in Fig. 9. The plots are composed of a line in the lower frequency region. However, there is no small semicircle at high frequency region. The straight line of the Nyquist plot at high frequency is related to the Warburg resistance resulting from the frequency dependence of ion diffusion/transport in the electrolyte [20, 36]. The large Warburg region of these electrodes shows the greater variations in ion diffusion path lengths and increased obstruction of ion movement. The more vertical shape, indicating fast diffusion of ions in electrolyte during charge/discharge process, is an ideally capacitive behavior [37]. The presence of GO with high electrical conductivity resulted in a lower resistance of charge transfer. The EIS result is in good agreement with the CV and GCD results.

The advantages of composite electrode CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) over the pure CeO_2 and GO were clearly demonstrated. Additionally, the cycling stability of the CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrode in 6 M KOH solution between 0 to 0.51 V was investigated at a current density of 5.0 A/g. As shown in Fig. 10, the capacitive retention was about 86.05 % after 500 cycles, indicating a good cycling ability of the composite materials. Before 100 cycles, the support GO allowed the deposition of the CeO_2 nanoparticle on the surfaces of GO sheets, which would enhance the mechanical strength of composite materials, resulting in the long charge/discharge cycling ability. After 250 cycles, the specific capacitance suffers a decline. The electrode materials were synthesized by a simple facile chemical coprecipitation

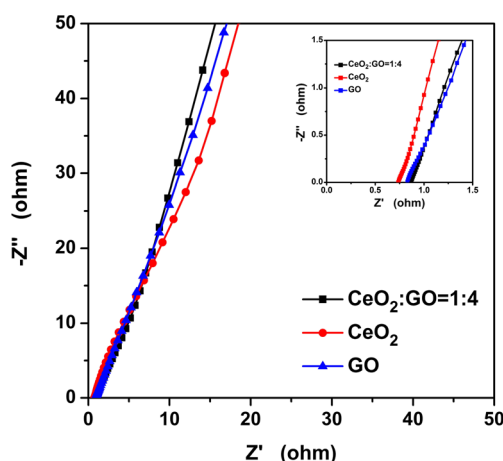


Fig. 9 Nyquist plots of CeO_2 , GO, and CeO_2 /GO (1:4) nanocomposite electrodes

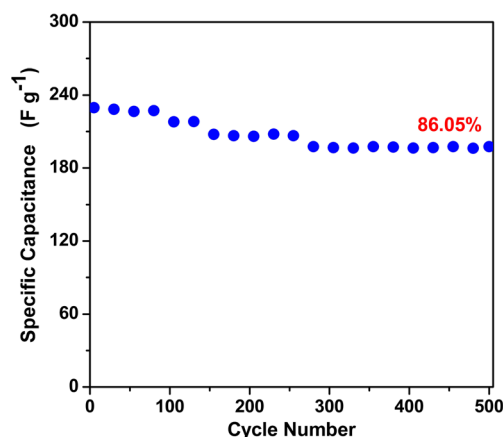


Fig. 10 Cycling performance of CeO_2 /GO (1:4) nanocomposite electrode at the current density of 5 A/g

method at room temperature. Due to the relatively low reaction temperature and the short aging time (just 30 min), the size of CeO_2 particles is very small that helps to get a higher specific capacitance compared with other methods in the literature as shown in Table 2. At the same time, the small size of CeO_2 particles could not guarantee long-term stability and superior cycling performance. The goodish cyclic stability exhibited by the CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample reveals that it is possible to use the nanocomposite in practical energy storage systems.

Conclusions

The nanostructured CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO (at different molar ratio) materials have been synthesized by a simple and inexpensive chemical coprecipitation method. The samples were systematically characterized by XRD, SEM, TEM, XPS, and Raman spectrum. The size of CeO_2 nanoparticle in CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) sample was about 2–3 nm. Electrochemical investigations reveal that CeO_2 nanoparticle-decorated GO (1:4) electrode can offer high specific capacitance (382.94 F/g at the current density of 3.0 A/g), attributing to the contributions of the good electrical conductivity of GO and the pseudocapacitance of the CeO_2 nanoparticles. Additionally, over 86 % of the original capacitance was retained after 500 cycles, indicating a good cycle stability of composite materials. These results show that a new class of material with high electrochemical performance has been identified.

Acknowledgments This work was supported by National Natural Science Foundation of China (Grant No. 51262029) and Program for Excellent Young Talents, Yunnan University.

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